

health care agencies will help to ensure that patients living in rural communities continue to have access to vital home health services. Surveys have shown the delivery of home health services in rural areas can be as much as 12 to 15 percent more costly because of the extra travel time required to cover long distances between patients, higher transportation expenses, and other cost factors.

Rural agencies also experience higher costs relative to productivity. Because of the longer travel distances, rural caregivers are unable to perform as many visits in a single day as their urban counterparts. Sandra Scott-Adams, the Executive Director of Visiting Nurses of Aroostook in northern Maine, tells me her agency covers 6,600 square miles to serve a population of only 73,000. Her costs are understandably much higher and her hard-working nurses are not able to see as many patients in a day as their urban counterparts. The long distances they must drive mean they are able to see fewer patients each day.

Moreover, agencies in rural areas are frequently smaller than their big city counterparts, which means their relative costs are higher due to smaller scale operations and an ability to take advantage of economies of scale. Smaller agencies with fewer patients and fewer visits mean that fixed costs, particularly those associated with meeting regulatory requirements, are spread over a smaller number of patients and visits, increasing overall per-patient and per-visit costs. If the rural add-on payment is eliminated on April 1, it will only put more pressure on our rural home health agencies that are already operating on a very narrow margin, and it could, in fact, force some of these agencies to close.

Some agencies operating in rural areas are the only home health providers for a vast geographic area. If any of these agencies are forced to close, the Medicare patients in that region will completely lose their access to home health care.

Earlier this year, the Medicare Payment Advisory Commission voted unanimously to extend the rural add-on payment for home health services for one year. I urge all of my colleagues to join me in cosponsoring this important legislation to ensure that all of our seniors, no matter where they live, whether they live in big cities, in suburbs, or the smallest communities, continue to have access to quality home health services.

#### SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

**SENATE RESOLUTION 90—EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF THE SENATE THAT THE SENATE STRONGLY SUPPORTS THE NON-PROLIFERATION PROGRAMS OF THE UNITED STATES**

Mr. BYRD (for himself, and Mr. LUGAR) submitted the following resolu-

tion; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 90

Whereas on March 6, 2003, the Senate gave its advice and consent to the Treaty Between the United States of America and the Russian Federation on Strategic Offensive Reductions, done at Moscow on May 24, 2002 (the Moscow Treaty), which treaty will result in the draw down of thousands of strategic nuclear weapons by December 31, 2012;

Whereas the lack of strict and effective control over and security of all weapons of mass destruction by the governments having jurisdiction over such weapons continues to be of grave concern to all nations that are threatened by terrorism, especially after the catastrophic terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001; and

Whereas despite some recent improvements in cooperation at the highest levels of the Russian Federation, various officials and agencies of the Russian Federation have been counter-productive in barring access and information to the United States with respect to nonproliferation programs and activities, thereby needlessly hindering the progress of such programs and activities: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That it is the sense of the Senate that—

(1) the Senate strongly supports the non-proliferation programs of the Department of Defense, the Department of Energy, and the Department of State, which programs are intended to reduce the worldwide threat posed by nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons that remain unsecured in the Russian Federation and elsewhere;

(2) the Russian Federation should continue to improve the access of the United States to key facilities, and the sharing of information with the United States, so as to bring a successful and timely conclusion to various non-proliferation programs and activities; and

(3) the United States should redouble its efforts to achieve full implementation of the nonproliferation programs of the Department of Defense, the Department of Energy, and the Department of State under effective management, and make full use of all funds that Congress appropriates or otherwise makes available for such programs.

**SENATE RESOLUTION 91—AFFIRMING THE IMPORTANCE OF A NATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER AND FASTING, AND EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF THE SENATE THAT MARCH, 17, 2003, SHOULD BE DESIGNATED AS A NATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER AND FASTING.**

Mr. SANTORUM (for himself and Mr. BROWNBACK) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 91

Whereas the President has sought the support of the international community in responding to the threat of terrorism, violent extremist organizations, and states that permit or host organizations that are opposed to democratic ideals;

Whereas a united stance against terrorism and terrorist regimes will likely lead to an increased threat to the armed forces and law enforcement personnel of those states that oppose these regimes of terror, and that take an active role in rooting out these enemy forces;

Whereas Congress has aided and supported a united response to acts of terrorism and violence inflicted upon the United States, our

allies, and peaceful individuals all over the world;

Whereas President Abraham Lincoln, at the outbreak of the Civil War, proclaimed that the last Thursday in September 1861 should be designated as a day of humility, prayer, and fasting for all people of the Nation;

Whereas it is appropriate and fitting to seek guidance, direction, and focus from God in times of conflict and in periods of turmoil;

Whereas it is through prayer, self-reflection, and fasting that we can better examine those elements of our lives that can benefit from God's wisdom and love;

Whereas prayer to God and the admission of human limitations and frailties begins the process of becoming both stronger and closer to God;

Whereas becoming closer to God helps provide direction, purpose, and conviction in those daily actions and decisions we must take;

Whereas our Nation, tested by civil war, military conflicts, and world wars, has always benefited from the grace and benevolence bestowed by God; and

Whereas dangers and threats to our Nation persist, and in this time of peril it is appropriate that the people of the United States, leaders and citizens alike, seek guidance, strength, and resolve through prayer and fasting: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That it is the sense of the Senate that—

(1) March 17, 2003, should be designated as a day for humility, prayer, and fasting for all people of the United States; and

(2) all people of the United States should—

(A) observe this day as a day of prayer and fasting;

(B) seek guidance from God to achieve greater understanding of our own failings;

(C) learn how we can do better in our everyday activities; and

(D) gain resolve in how to confront those challenges which we must confront.

#### AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 262. Mr. HOLLINGS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 23, setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Governments for fiscal year 2004 and including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal year 2003 and for fiscal years 2005 through 2013; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 263. Mr. HOLLINGS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 23, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

#### TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

**SA 262.** Mr. HOLLINGS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the concurrent resolution S. Con. Res. 23, setting forth the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2004 and including the appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal year 2003 and for fiscal years 2005 through 2013; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

**SEC. . SENSE OF THE SENATE REGARDING A VALUE-ADDED TAX TO PAY THE COSTS OF WAR ON IRAQ.**

It is the sense of the Senate that the recommended levels and amounts in section 101 assume a 2 percent value added tax to pay